



News Release

Rhode Island National Wildlife Refuge Complex

Block Island NWR □ John H. Chafee NWR at Pettaquamscutt Cove □ Ninigret NWR □ Sachuest Point NWR □ Trustom Pond NWR

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For Immediate Release

Oct 23rd, 2013

Controlled Burning at Trustom Pond National Wildlife Refuges to Benefit Wildlife Habitat and Visitors

The U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service will conduct controlled burns at Trustom Pond National Wildlife Refuge in South Kingstown, Rhode Island, in accordance with an approved Prescribed Fire Plan. The controlled burns will occur over the course of two days, weather dependent, between October 28th and the end of November 2013, at which time the refuges will be partially closed for public safety.

Controlled burns will be conducted by trained and skilled fire management personnel from the local area. The burns will adhere to the smoke management guidelines required of the Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management. The use of a controlled burn is part of the Rhode Island National Wildlife Refuge Complex (RINWRC) annual habitat management plan.

The objectives of the burns are to restore wildlife habitat by removing thatch, woody vegetation and non-native vegetation from areas that are managed for native warm season grasses and unique plants. Removing invasive, non-native plants and woody vegetation allow for the growth of native grassland plants that provided wildlife habitat. Once restored these areas provide valuable foraging and nesting habitats for bobolinks, eastern meadowlarks, northern bobwhites, eastern bluebirds, tree swallows and other grassland and song birds. To observe these birds and other wildlife, viewing scopes are available at several refuge observation platforms. Birding backpacks with binoculars and bird guides are also available to borrow at the Complex visitor centers.

Because controlled burning is weather-dependent, visitors are encouraged to call the office at 401.364.9124 during the burn period for any possible trail closures for the day. Visitors can also visit the Complex's website at <http://www.fws.gov/ninigret/complex/> or on Facebook, keyword: Rhode Island National Wildlife Refuge Complex.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is the principal federal agency responsible for conserving, protecting and enhancing fish, wildlife and plants and their habitat for the continuing benefit of the American people.